District Raigad near Mumbai. Chargesheets against the offenders have been filed in the Court by Maharashtra State Forest Department.

Banning Genetically Modified Seeds

†2788. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the federation of some farmers organizations has submitted a memorandum to Government, requesting to ban the sale and use of genetically modified seeds in the country for the next five years, till the farmers of the country are pepared for it;

(b) whether France, Austria, Denmark, Luxemburg and Greece have banned the use of Bt. Cotton and genome developed seeds;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any decision in the matter so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Some Farmers Unions have submitted a memorandum to the Government requesting that no commercial release of GM crops should be made until capacity of farmers is built on biosafety issues.

(b) Countries like France, Austria, Luxemburg and Denmark do not grow cotton and therefore banning Bt. cotton in these countries is not much of significance. Genetically modified corn is being grown in France as reported by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA). A few individual states of the European Commission have a ban on individual GM products.

(c) and (d) The Government is following a policy of case by case approval of transgenic crops. Introduction of any new technology

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

requires careful evaluation and long term sustainable benefits. Extensive Rules and guidelines have been made for evaluating environmental and health safety aspects of genetically modified organisms. Any organisation involved in the use of genetic engineering techniques has to obtain approval of the Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) set up under the 1989 Rules in the Department of Biotechnology for conducting testing under laboratory conditions and confined field conditions. Thereafter approval of Genetic Engineering Approval Committee is required for large scale trials and introduction into the environment.

Registration of Illegal Lead Recycle Industries

2789. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated certain new rules on usage and recycling of acid lead batteries;

(b) if so, the details thereof, along with the number of illegal lead recycle industries which got registered themselves under the rules, so far; and

(c) the fresh steps taken for strict implementation of these rules in order to end menace of lead pollution in the country, especially in the Capital?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have brought out the Batteries (Management & Handling) Rules, 2001. The rules make it mandatory for manufacturers, assemblers, reconditioners and importers to ensure that the used batteries are collected back as per schedule against new batteries sold and also to ensure their availability only to such recyclers who are registered with the Ministry of Environment & Forests. The recyclers are registered based on their posessing environmentally sound technology for processing lead acid batteries. So far, 41 lead acid battery recycling units possessing environmentally sound technology have been registered with the Ministry. No illegal lead recycling industry has been registered with the Ministry.

(c) The Pollution Control Boards in the States and Pollution